UNITED
NATIONS

T

Trusteeship Council

Distr.
GENERAL

T/PV.1694
11 June 1992

ENGLISH

Fifty-ninth session

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 1694th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 29 May 1992, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. FELIX-PAGANON (France)

- Examination of the annual report of the Administrative Authority for the year ended 30 September 1991: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (continued)

- Report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Palau, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, March 1992 (continued)

- Organization of work

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages, preferably in the same language as the text to which they refer. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also, if possible, incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent, within one week of the date of this document, to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Office of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

92-60727 8784V (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

EXAMINATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 1991: TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS (T/1962) (continued)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Does any member wish to put questions to the representatives of the Administering Authority at this time? Since that does not appear to be the case, I suggest that we continue consideration of the item at our next meeting.

The Council will now begin the general debate.

Mr. ZHANG Yan (China) (interpretation from Chinese): It gives me great pleasure to speak during the general debate of the fifty-ninth session of the United Nations Trusteeship Council. Since the beginning of the current session, the Chinese delegation has actively participated in various activities of the Council. We will continue to work with other members of the Council for positive results at this session.

According to the United Nations Charter, the principal task of the international trusteeship system is aimed at furthering international peace and security and promoting the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of Trust Territories and their progressive development towards self-government or independence. We are glad to note that, thanks to the protracted efforts made by the people in the Trust Territories and the international community, including the United Nations, the majority of Trust Territories have terminated, one after another, their trusteeship and become independent members of the international community. In the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands have also brought their trusteeship to an end in accordance with Security Council

(Mr. Zhang Yan, China)

resolution 683 (1990). At present, Palau is the only entity of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands that remains under the United Nations trusteeship system. Its political status remains an outstanding issue.

According to resolution 2194 (S-XXI) adopted by the United Nations Trusteeship Council on 19 December 1991, and upon the invitation of the Administering Authority, the Trusteeship Council dispatched a visiting mission to Palau in March this year. China also had its representative on the Mission. Through their contacts with people from all walks of life in Palau during their visit and inspection, members of the Visiting Mission saw with their own eyes the current state of affairs and the problems existing in the political, economic and social development in Palau and achieved a better understanding of the demands and aspirations of the Palau people for self-determination and economic and cultural development. The report submitted by the Mission to the current Council session contains a detailed account of this visit, as well as useful recommendations and ideas advanced by the Mission. We hope that this visit will have a positive impact on accelerating the process of self-determination in Palau.

(Mr. Zhang Yan, China)

In the past few days, the Council has considered the report prepared by the Administering Authority on the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and heard the statements made by the Council members, the Administering Authority and the representative of Palau, as well as the petitioners. We feel that this has not only helped us better understand the situation of the Trust Territory, but also contributed to the comprehensive and correct implementation of the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement.

Although the people in the Trust Territory have made some discernible progress in the political, economic and social fields, we note that some reasonable demands and aspirations of the people in the Trust Territory have yet to be met; there are still some issues between the Trust Territory and the Administering Authority that demand a prompt solution. We hope the parties concerned will act in accordance with the Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement and seek appropriate solutions through consultations so as to facilitate the political, economic and social advancement of the people of this Trust Territory.

The Chinese Government has always supported the people of the Trust Territory in their desire for national self-determination and independence. We therefore respect the choice the people of Palau made of their own free will, in conformity with their national interest, over their future political status. In our view, the political future of Palau should be decided by the Palauans themselves. The Chinese delegation also holds that the Administering Authority should, before termination of the trusteeship in Palau, adopt practical measures, fulfil its obligations towards the Trust Territory and meet the just aspirations and demands of the people in the Trust Territory so

(Mr. Zhang Yan, China)

as to create the necessary conditions for the early realization of self-determination and independent development in Palau.

Mr. LACROIX (France)(interpretation from French): On behalf of my delegation I should like, Sir, to congratulate you on your unanimous election to preside over the Council. I need hardly say how pleased we are to see you guiding our work this year, during this fifty-ninth session. Allow me also to welcome the delegation from Palau, whose participation makes, as it does every year, a very useful contribution to the smooth functioning of our work.

The Trusteeship Council has begun its present session in a new context: two of the entities that, a few years ago, still made up the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands - the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia - are now full Members of the United Nations, after their populations chose independence. Another Territory, the Northern Marianas, which two years ago still came under the jurisdiction of our Council, has also obtained new status in accordance with the will expressed by its population.

The trusteeship regime now applies only to Palau. As statements preceding my delegation's show, everyone realizes the urgency of putting an end to this situation, which the present context no longer justifies and which does not correspond to the wishes of the Palauans.

It is therefore important that Palau swiftly adopt a new status in accordance with the wishes of its population, in order to continue its economic and social development on a stable institutional basis. We have noted that discussions have been continuing between the Administering Authority and the authorities of Palau in order to overcome the difficulties, particularly of an institutional nature, that have been hindering the

(Mr. Lacroix, France)

achievement of this goal. My delegation hopes that these discussions will lead to an early solution. We feel that it is essential to the future of Palau that there be an end to the uncertainty surrounding its status.

Of course, it is not for our Council to express its views on the future institutions of Palau; that is up to that Territory's population. Allow us, however, to suggest that if the Compact of Free Association is not achievable, all other options should be examined.

Pending the removal of the trusteeship from Palau, the Administering Authority must continue to fulfil the obligations incumbent upon it. My delegation has noted with satisfaction this year the assurances given by the delegation of the United States on this point.

We are pleased that the Trusteeship Council was able, this year, to observe directly the situation in Palau, thanks to the Visiting Mission it sent in March. I take this opportunity to express our thanks to the Palauan authorities for the welcome and cooperation it extended to the Mission. My delegation studied with great interest the information contained in the Mission's report regarding both the Territory's status and its socio-economic situation.

In that connection, the information contained in the report, together with the material customarily provided to us every year by the Administering Authority, shows that tangible progress has been achieved. We noted in particular that the development of the tourism sector in the archipelago is continuing steadily, and that the performance of the fishing industry, regarding which various initiatives have been taken by the authorities of Palau, is very encouraging. We also noted with interest that the construction of a new hospital in Koror is almost finished.

(Mr. Lacroix, France)

My delegation is aware, however, that difficulties continue despite the aforementioned progress and, more generally, despite the positive results achieved in the Territory regarding the democratic nature of those institutions and the standard of living of the population. These difficulties, which have been noted in the Visiting Mission's report and mentioned by the petitioner, are sources of legitimate concern for Palauans. We have noted in particular the concerns expressed regarding the need for environmental protection of the archipelago, and the continuation of illegal fishing in the territorial waters of Palau.

My delegation expresses the hope that these difficulties will continue to be the subject of talks between the Palauan authorities and the Administering Authority. We hope the same will apply to the Territory's budgetary problems.

My delegation fully agrees with the observation made in the Visiting Mission's report, namely that the present status of Palau no longer matches the degree of political, economic and social maturity it has achieved. We feel that efforts undertaken to put an end to its status must be actively pursued so that Palau can accede as soon as possible to a new status chosen by its population.

I will conclude by expressing my thanks to the representatives of the Secretariat, whose dedication, efficiency and competence this year again have contributed to the smooth functioning of our work.

Mr. EVANS (United Kingdom): The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has consistently supported the efforts of the people of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands to achieve whatever form of self-government meets their wishes and their particular circumstances. That is why we supported the adoption of Trusteeship Council

(Mr. Evans, United Kingdom)

resolution 2183 (LIII) in 1986, by which the Council recognized that the peoples of Micronesia had freely exercized their right to self-determination, and had chosen either free association with the United States or Commonwealth status. Likewise, we voted for Security Council resolution 683 (1990). We also co-sponsored General Assembly resolutions 46/2 and 46/3 on admission to membership of the United Nations of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. We hope that it will not be too long before we are able to perform a similar pleasurable duty in respect of Palau.

(Mr. Evans, United Kingdom)

We have listened with great interest to the statements of the representatives of the Administering Authority, in particular Assistant Secretary of the Interior Stella Guerra; to the representatives of Palau, particularly the Honourable Santos Olikong, Minister of State; to the petitioner; and of course to our colleagues in the Trusteeship Council. We are fortunate in being able this year to study not only the annual report of the Administering Authority but also the report of the Visiting Mission, which for the first time comprised representatives from all the members of the Trusteeship Council.

The Chairman of the Visiting Mission, in his statement before the Trusteeship Council on 26 May, referred to the evident sense of frustration in Palau about the impasse over Palau's future political status. The trusteeship was never designed to last forever; it is not in the interest of the people of Palau that it should do so. As Ambassador Tahir-Kheli said in her opening statement, the Security Council did not intend when it created the trusteeship in 1947 that it would still be in existence into the last decade of the twentieth century. We believe that the United States, as Administering Authority, has done its best to fulfil its obligations under the trusteeship and has been generous with its assistance and guidance to Palau over the past 40 or so years. The Compact of Free Association has been clearly favoured not just by the Administering Authority but also by the majority of Palauans in every plebiscite to date; support for it has never fallen below 60 per cent. We have heard with interest of the proposal by Palau for a referendum in the near future on a constitutional amendment to allow the Compact to be approved by a simple majority of the electorate, which would be followed by another referendum on the Compact. We hope that, whichever course of action Palauans

(Mr. Evans, United Kingdom)

choose to take, early progress can be made on resolving the current impasse so that, as the Honourable Minister of State said in his opening statement, the trusteeship can be terminated within the next year.

In our statement to the Trusteeship Council last year my delegation said that we believed that Secretary's Order 3142 was necessary in order for the Administering Authority to fulfil its obligations to the Trust Territory. That remains our view. We have however noted that in its report the Visiting Mission indicated that it had encountered a great deal of criticism about the impact of the Order. These criticisms have been repeated to the Council by the Honourable Minister of State. It is clear that it is crucial for Palau now, and in the future, to ensure that it meets its financial responsibilities. Without this commitment Palau cannot hope to attract international capital and investment which, as we know from the experience of our dependent territories, is so vital to any emerging economy. We are, however, reassured by the statement in the Council on 27 May by the Assistant Secretary of State that following recent discussions between Palau and the Administering Authority the stage has been set for improved budget management. Of particular importance were her statements that the budget-suspension provision will probably soon begin to fade away, and that capital projects such as certain road-construction schemes may shortly resume. The poor state of Palau's roads was of course noted in both the Administering Authority's annual report and the report of the Visiting Mission. Particularly welcome therefore is the grant of $2.6 million for bridge and road repairs which was announced to the Council by the Assistant Secretary.

(Mr. Evans, United Kingdom)

Much of the reports of both the Administering Authority and the Visiting Mission was devoted to questions of economic and social development. There is much that is welcome, including continued progress in the development of the Palauan fisheries industry. This provides a much-needed source of revenue to an economy which is overly reliant on grants from the Administering Authority, and where levels of pay and staffing in the public sector need to be kept under careful control. As we know also from the experience of the United Kingdom's dependent territories, revenue from licensing arrangements, the establishment of fisheries-related enterprises and the development of an expanding export industry can do a great deal to provide much-needed employment and revenue. However, the illegal activities of foreign fishing vessels, poaching in Palauan waters, are clearly cause for concern. In this respect we hope that the Administering Authority will take note of the suggestion in paragraph 125 of the report of the Visiting Mission. Finally, on fisheries we were pleased to note that action has been taken to improve the quantity and quality of information on catches, information which is vital for the proper management of Palau's fisheries resources.

Tourism continues to be of major importance to the Palauan economy. Palau appears to have suffered less than most from the world-wide reduction in tourism as a result of the Gulf War and the subsequent recession. As noted by the Visiting Mission, Palau has the potential to become a major tourist destination, and further communications and infrastructure improvements, and perhaps some provision for tourist-industry staff training in the master plan, will help towards the achievement of this goal. But Palau's attraction for tourists stems from its natural beauty. We hope that the Government of Palau

(Mr. Evans, United Kingdom)

will ensure that the growth of tourism does not lead to a degradation of Palau's natural environment.

We are particularly pleased at the progress reported in the social field. The progress towards completion of the new hospital is certainly most welcome and we look forward to its opening, as envisaged, at the end of this year. I should also like to refer to the action being taken by the Administering Authority and the Palauan Government on the question of drugs. The Anti-Substance-Abuse Programme is clearly making an important contribution in this field and we commend the robust action taken recently by the various United States agencies and the Palauan authorities in Peleliu to confiscate and destroy marijuana plants. We very much share the views of the Palauan authorities that supply and demand for drugs must be tackled together.

Finally, I should like to reiterate our view that Palau is ready for self-government, as the Palauan people themselves have amply demonstrated. We promise the people of Palau our support in their efforts to determine at the earliest possible date a future political status which fully accords with their wishes. The Honourable Minister of State has said that he wishes to be the last representative of Palau to report under the trusteeship relationship. I can only hope that I shall be the last representative of the United Kingdom to make such a statement in this Council.

Before I conclude, I should like to raise one other point - I am, of course, prepared, if the President so rules, to raise it under any other agenda item.

I have in mind the question of General Assembly resolution 46/190, adopted on 20 December 1991 and entitled "Pattern of conferences". In paragraph 14 of that resolution, the Assembly invites the Trusteeship Council

(Mr. Evans, United Kingdom)

to review its meeting requirements. This refers back to document A/46/32, "Report of the Committee on Conferences", issued during the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly. In this document it is stated that the Trusteeship Council and its drafting committees will be allocated four weeks of conference time in May next year, for its sixtieth session.

That is clearly unrealistic and I would hope that the Secretariat would be encouraged to take such action as is necessary to amend this allocation.

Mr. LACROIX (France) (interpretation from French): I wish simply to state that my delegation supports what was said just now by the representative of the United Kingdom concerning the timetable of meetings for the next session of the Trusteeship Council.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian): In these times of radical change in the world, affecting all States and peoples, the existence of a Territory under colonial dependence and trusteeship is strikingly anachronistic. Today the Trusteeship Council is considering the situation in one such Territory, the last under the International Trusteeship System - that is, the situation in Palau.

My delegation understands the feelings of the people of Palau, which have been expressed to the members of the Trusteeship Council as well as to the members of the Visiting Mission during their visit to Palau. The members of the Visiting Mission have stressed that the people of this Trust Territory have outgrown the status of trustees and are seeking the earliest possible solution to the question of their Territory's future political status.

(Mr. Berezovsky, Russian Federation)

We also understand the problems and difficulties that face Palau as it moves towards that new status. In addition to the annual report of the Administering Authority, at this session of the Trusteeship Council we have been given additional and extremely detailed information on the political, economic and social situation in Palau that was gathered locally by the United Nations Visiting Mission. Indeed, the Visiting Mission's conclusions, views and recommendations are important and should be taken into account by both the Administering Authority and by the Council itself in its further work and in preparing its report to the Security Council.

Without going into a detailed account of the problems of the Trust Territory - since those are sufficiently reflected in the documents submitted to this session - we should like to note that, notwithstanding the efforts made by the Administering Authority, as well as those of the local authorities in Palau, to achieve economic and social progress, the principal problems remain those of financial independence, external indebtedness, insufficiently developed industry, a lack of suitable and sufficient infrastructure and capital funding, a low level of electrification in the Territory, insufficient medical services and so on. These are also mentioned in the report of the Visiting Mission to Palau.

It is clear that the obligations of the United States under the terms of the Trusteeship Agreement and the United Nations Charter are still in force and will continue to be in force until the population of Palau is able to exercise its right to self-determination on the basis of a free expression of its will and the subsequent appropriate decision by the Security Council. The Administering Authority's oft-repeated determination - which it has reiterated at this session - to follow this path unswervingly testifies to its responsible

(Mr. Berezovsky, Russian Federation)

approach to achieving the goals of its trusteeship. In light of that, it is important that the complex efforts being made by the Administering Authority to work out an overall plan for the future development of the Territory should also take into account existing programmes for economic development. In this connection we should like to express our satisfaction at the statement by the representative of the United States, Ms. Stella Guerra, in the meeting of 27 May, with regard to the Administering Authority's plans to promote and assist several such programmes.

Among the problems requiring solution with which Palau is faced, the main problem involves the question of that Territory's future political status. This is the central question, and one that is of great concern to the population of Palau, to the Trusteeship Council and to the international community as a whole. The people of Palau themselves must find a solution to that question. There is no doubt that the United Nations and the Administering Authority must assist them in finding that solution and in achieving the goals of trusteeship so that the people of Palau are provided with all the means necessary to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and free choice in free elections in accordance with the United Nations Charter, the Trusteeship Agreement and the Declaration on decolonization.

In building a new world order based on the primacy of right and human values, the transition from relations based on conflict to those based on cooperation and partnership includes a review of global military doctrines. In this connection the Russian delegation regards as very promising the assurances given by the United States to both the Trusteeship Council and the Security Council that it has no plans to position military bases in Palau.

(Mr. Berezovsky, Russian Federation)

Those assurances are in keeping with the need to reduce foreign presence there and will also promote the development of overall cooperation in the region.

The Russian delegation is in favour of the full implementation of the goals of trusteeship with regard to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and Palau. We support that people's inalienable right to self-determination, free choice of status under the Trusteeship Agreement and the Declaration on decolonization. That is my country's position. I would express the hope that the present session of the Trusteeship Council will promote social and economic progress in Palau and bring the Territory nearer to determining its future political status on the basis of the free expression of the will of its people.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Perhaps I should now turn briefly to the comments of the representative of the United Kingdom and supported by the representative of France with regard to the organization of the Council's session next year. If there are no further comments on this point -

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian): Although it does not relate to the general debate on the situation in the Trust Territory, I too would like to raise a question. Of course, the bodies of the United Nations must be concerned about the more rational use of the means, time and resources of the Organization. I understand that the question will be raised at the appropriate time. However, it seems to me that to determine now some kind of time-frame for the Trusteeship Council's session next year, when it is very hard for us to predict the evolution of events in the Trust Territory and when the Council is still engaged in consideration of the situation there, is unjustified.

(Mr. Berezovsky, Russian Federation)

Let us look at the real state of affairs. We know that last year the Trusteeship Council session was allotted four weeks. However, the session concluded much more quickly. At that time, no damage occurred to the interests of the Organization or, above all, to the work of a major Charter body of the United Nations. No harm was done. The same thing may occur at this session. We planned a session of four weeks but we shall finish in a week and a half, and that would be without prejudice to the work. The Organization can only gain from this. Therefore, it seems to me that to establish some kind of rigid time-frame which might perhaps limit the work of the Trusteeship Council without knowing in advance what might take place, while not necessarily being dangerous would not really be justifiable.

Therefore, it seems to me that, while the question raised by the representative of the United Kingdom is correct in principle and will be taken into account in the future work of the Council at the next session, the Council must also take into account the need for the rational use of the resources and time of the United Nations.

Mr. EVANS (United Kingdom): I do not want to take up too much of the Council's time on this matter. I would simply, however, like to clarify that what I was referring to was in no sense any attempt to curtail the work of this Council, but simply to point out, as we were requested to do by the Fifth Committee, that as it stands the meetings' requirement as listed by the United Nations Secretariat for this Council next year bears no relationship to the reality of the time actually taken up by the Council in its meetings over the past couple of years. Certainly this year we shall be meeting for six or seven days. It seems rather strange that we are asking the Conference Services of the United Nations to allot to us four weeks.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I believe that we could legitimately return to this question when we consider what kind of recommendation we shall make to the Secretariat. We can recommend to the Secretariat that due note be taken of the statements made at the end of our meeting on Monday when we shall come to the consideration of our future work.

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS VISITING MISSION TO PALAU, TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS, MARCH 1992 (T/1964, T/L.1282) (continued)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I should like to draw the attention of members to the draft resolution contained in document T/L.1282.

I now call on the representative of Papua New Guinea, who wishes to speak on this agenda item.

Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea): I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Council once again and also the Administering Authority for having involved the Government of Papua New Guinea in the consideration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands for quite some time now. My Government is committed to ensuring that the wishes of the peoples of the Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories will be taken as the paramount considerations of this body and other related bodies that deal with Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories. This commitment is known to the international community.

I wish also to express the thanks of my Government to the President and the Government of Palau for the welcome opportunities they have given us during these various visiting missions in which Papua New Guinea participated. We have become better acquainted with the people and their problems, and having visited Palau in person with the Council's recent Visiting Mission, I can testify that we have much in common culturally,

(Mr. Lohia, Papula New Guinea)

socially and also in terms of the aspirations of the people. The people of the Pacific Islands have always been independent. It is only at the time of contact with the outside world that even the learned people wrote in various books and in their literature that we were recently discovered and therefore that our history began then. Our cultures and traditions and those of the people of Palau have been there for centuries. They are noble traditions and should therefore be honoured by the international community.

My Government wholeheartedly supports the report of the Visiting Mission to Palau, including its conclusions and recommendations. We also note that the Administering Authority has explained to my delegation that, in supporting the report, its conclusions and recommendations were also approved.

(Mr. Lohia, Papua New Guinea)

It is on that basis that my Government will continue to observe and monitor developments in the Territory.

I should like to make a number of comments about some specific issues. As a result of my observations and those of many of my colleagues over a number of visiting missions, we continue to conclude that, sadly, there is hardly any economic development in Palau. Having had the opportunity to see the situation over more than 40 years, we have found no plan by the Administering Authority for the Territory's economic development. We shall therefore find it difficult if the Council or the Administering Authority should insist on a master plan to be the basis of economic development in the Territory. Master plans are very difficult to come by. I hope that a master plan will not hinder projects approved by the authorities of Palau for its economic and social development.

Infrastructures needed for economic and social development are also limited. This is noted in the reports of the Administering Authority and of the Visiting Mission. Without roads it would be very difficult for people in the outer islands to enjoy the hospital facilities in Koror, and it would be difficult for fishermen and women from the outer islands to enjoy the markets in Koror. We hope that the plans and financial support which now seem to be in place will encourage those very important facilities to be provided in order to help all the people of Palau.

It is also my delegation's view that Palau's political future has not been well thought out in the sense of all the options having been offered to the people of Palau. I believe that a Compact of Free Association produced in consultation with the people of Palau is the only option to have been offered; only lately do we hear that independence is available. However, the

(Mr. Lohia, Papua New Guinea)

suggestion of independence being available to the people of Palau has some stigma attached to it, in our opinion. It is probably the view of some people that independence will be bad for the people of Palau and therefore they should not go for it. Therefore, we have been told formally and informally that the only viable option is the Compact of Free Association. Such kinds of pressure lead us to conclude that the inalienable rights of the people of Palau have not been respected.

As many Council members have stated, the decision on political status and the right to make that decision should remain with the people of Palau, and we, the members of the international community, including the Administering Authority, should assist the leaders and the people to make a choice that is important to them. However, the choice must remain with the people of Palau. If the Compact of Free Association is what they choose, that is their right.

We believe the people of Palau have already opted for that, but a number of issues included in the Compact of Free Association make it difficult for the people of Palau to enjoy their rights. I refer to the nuclear and military provisions in the Constitution. The authorities and the people of Palau have humbly requested the Administering Authority to consider these issues separately from the Compact of Free Association. I believe that is an honourable request, and my delegation is not satisfied with the negative response given by the Administering Authority.

The nuclear provision in the Constitution is in accord with the South Pacific Nuclear-free Zone Treaty. Therefore, I believe that all the members of the South Pacific Forum support that nuclear provision. Accordingly, if it is the major stumbling-block to implementing the Compact of Free Association, I believe the Administering Authority should give positive consideration to

(Mr. Lohia, Papua New Guinea)

allowing the people of Palau to enjoy the decision that they have rightly taken.

With regard to the military provision, I believe it is not difficult for countries with the capability in this area to function from any part of the world; military technology makes this possible for anyone, as was demonstrated in relation to the situation in Kuwait. If the international community is to defend the constitutional rights of the people of Kuwait, I believe the Constitution of Palau should be respected in the same way. If the insistence on including nuclear and military provisions reflects an intention to erode the Constitution of Palau, I believe it is contrary to international law and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States.

My delegation and our Government and people have a very positive relationship with the Administering Authority. We shall continue in that partnership to ensure that the "aquatic continent" of the Pacific and the extended family that we enjoy in our traditions includes the United States, France and Britain because of their sovereign presence in the region.

(Mr. Lohia, Papua New Guinea)

We shall continue to support the work of the Council and the deliberations on Palau, the last entity of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. We hope that we can reach a final and positive conclusion on this matter as soon as possible. Once again, my delegation and I would like to thank the Council for having given us the opportunity to obtain firsthand knowledge of the situation in Palau. We also endorse the introductory remarks made by the Vice-President - the leader of the Mission to Palau - regarding the Visiting Mission's report.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Since there are no further speakers on the report, I now call on the representative of the United Kingdom to introduce the draft resolution contained in document T/L.1282.

Mr. EVANS (United Kingdom): As members of the Council can see, document T/L.1282, a draft resolution on the report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Palau, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 1992, is a short document. It is sponsored by China, France, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I should like to draw the attention of members of the Council to an omission in operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution. In the second line, the words "the report of" should be inserted after the words "conclusions and observations of". The new operative paragraph 3 would therefore read as follows:

"Decides that it will continue to take the recommendations, conclusions and observations of the report of the Visiting Mission into account in future examination of matters relating to the Trust Territory."

(Mr. Evans, United Kingdom)

I understand that that oral amendment is acceptable to all the sponsors, and I therefore move the adoption of the draft resolution.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): It is my understanding that the members of the Council are prepared to waive rule 57 of the rules of procedure of the Council, which specifies that draft reports and draft resolutions should be circulated to the members 24 hours in advance of the meeting at which they are to be considered. If there are no objections, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): If there are no other comments, I shall take it that the Council decides to adopt draft resolution T/L.1282, as orally amended, without a vote.

Draft resolution T/L.1282, as orally amended, was adopted.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The Council has thus concluded its consideration of the report of the Visiting Mission to Palau, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and of agenda item 5.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Before adjourning the meeting, I wish to inform members that, as decided in informal consultations, the Council at its meeting at 10.30 a.m. on Monday, 1 June, will hear closing statements from the representatives of the Administering Authority of the Trust Territory. The Council will also take decisions on its conclusions and recommendations to the Security Council contained in the report of the Drafting Committee and on agenda items 11 and 12.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.